8

CLAIMS:

1.   A method for configuring an adaptive device according to user needs, comprising:

providing at least one adaptable characteristic having at least one setting and at least one learning heuristic for the determination of said at least one setting, said heuristic having an enable/disable mode;

initializing said at least one setting to a previously learned user preference and said enable/disable mode to a previously input mode, if any, or respectively to pre-determined default preference setting and mode setting, otherwise;

for said at least one adaptable characteristic, continuously performing the steps of:

(i)   accepting a first user input for said at least one setting and a second user input for the enable/disable learning mode for said at least one learning heuristic of said at least one setting,

(ii)   based on said second user input, determining a user preference as

- the accepted first user input if said mode is disable learning, and

- a learned user preference derived by application of the at least one

   learning heuristic to the accepted first user input, otherwise, and

(iii)   making the at least one setting equal to the determined user preference.

2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

providing a user interface for user input and device output; and

said continuously accepting step (i) further comprises the step of accepting the first and second user input via said provided user interface.

3.   The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of providing said user interface device as:

an output mechanism comprising at least one of a text display, audio device, video device, a beeping device, and a flashing device, and

9

an input mechanism comprising at least one of a microphone, button, slider, touchpad, touchscreen, pen device, camera, sensor and keyboard.

4.   The method of claim 1, wherein:
said initializing step further comprises the steps of -
        receiving a unique user identifier, and
        searching a memory on-board the device for at least one previously learned user preference for the at least one setting of the at least one adaptable characteristic corresponding to the received user identifier; and
said learning step further comprises the step of storing in the on-board memory of the device said learned user preference identified by said unique user identifier for said at least one setting of the at least one adaptable characteristic.

5.   The method claim 4, wherein said storing step further comprises the steps of:
        providing a stored user profile corresponding to the received user identifier; and
        storing said learned user preference including a preference level as part of said provided user profile and having the preference level set to 'most preferable'.

6.   The method claim 5, further comprising the steps of:
        providing a user interface for user input and device output; and
        said continuously accepting step (i) further comprises the step of accepting the first and second user input via said provided user interface.

7.   The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of providing said user interface device as
        an output mechanism comprising at least one of a text display, audio device, video device, a beeping device, and a flashing device, and
        an input mechanism comprising at least one of a microphone, button, slider, touchpad, touchscreen, pen device, camera, sensor and keyboard.

8.   The method of claim 6, wherein said accepting step(i) further comprises the steps of:

    selecting a previously stored preference for said at least one setting;

    optionally, editing said selected previously stored preference; and

    inputting as said first user input said edited preference.

9.   The method claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

    providing a user interface for user input and device output to the user; and

    said continuously accepting step (i) further comprises the step of accepting the first and second user input via said provided user interface.

10.   The method of claim 9, wherein said accepting step (i) further comprises the steps of:

    selecting a previously stored preference for said at least one setting;

    optionally, editing said selected previously stored preference; and

    inputting as said first user input said edited preference.

11.   The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of providing said user interface device as:

        an output mechanism comprising at least one of a text display, audio device, video device, a beeping device, and a flashing device, and

        an input mechanism comprising at least one of a microphone, button, slider, touchpad, touchscreen, pen device, camera, sensor and keyboard.

12.   An adaptive device, comprising:

    at least one adaptable characteristic having at least one setting and at least one learning heuristic for the determination of said at least one setting, said heuristic having an enable/disable mode;

    an heuristic component configured to:

set said at least one characteristic to at least one previously learned user preference and said enable/disable mode to a previously input mode, if any, or respectively to a pre-determined default preference setting and mode setting, otherwise;

continuously receive a first user input for said at least one setting and a second user input for the enable/disable learning mode of the at least one learning heuristic of said at least one setting; and

reset said at least one setting to the first user input;

a learning module that, if said second user input is enable mode, is configured to learn a user preference for said at least one setting from the first user input according to said at least one learning heuristic of said at least one setting.

13.   The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising providing a user interface for user input and device output.

14.   The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said user interface is configured as:

an output mechanism comprising at least one of a text display, audio device, video device, a beeping device, and a flashing device, and

an input mechanism comprising at least one of a microphone, button, slider, touchpad, touchscreen, pen device, camera, sensor and keyboard.

15.   The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:

a non-volatile memory; and

wherein, said control component if further configured to:

receive a unique user identifier via the use interface, and

search the non-volatile memory for at least one previously learned user preference for the

at least one setting corresponding to the received user identifier; and

wherein, said learning module is further configured to store said learned user preference identified by said unique user identifier for said at least one setting in the non-volatile memory.

12

16.   The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the learning module is further configured
to: provide a stored user profile in said non-volatile memory corresponding to the user
identifier; and
store said learned user preference including a preference level as part of said provided
user profile having the preference level set to 'most preferable'.

17.   The apparatus of claim 16, wherein said component is configured to:
select a previously stored preference for said at least one setting;
optionally, edit said selected previously stored preference; and
store edited preference in the non-volatile memory as the most preferred.